

A Parent's Guide to:

**Your infant's and child's
Resilience,
Protection,
and
Stress**

Science has shown that every human infant is born with a brain designed for Resilience: Love, Affection, Respect, Curiosity, Drive, Intelligence, Optimism, and Life-Long Commitment

That inborn Resilience in you, your partner, and your infant or young child needs to be protected in order to grow and thrive. Scientists have proven that certain types of experience protect Resilience. They are called Protective Factors.

Science has also shown that some stressful experiences threaten your Resilience and that of your child. They are called Adverse Childhood Experiences or "ACEs" that often lead to Stress. To learn more, please open this Brochure.

This Brochure is provided by your physician or early childhood supporter to encourage healthy relationships between parents and their infants or young children.

A Parent's Guide to Your Infant's and Child's Resilience, Protection, and Stress offers support and suggestions but is not therapy. It was originally developed by the early childhood service providers, pediatricians, psychologists, and health advocates of Southern Kennebec Healthy Start, Augusta, Maine, in 2006.

Revised edition April 2010

**Additional copies may be obtained from your service provider or from
H. Burt Richardson, M.D., F.A.A.P. email: burttr@aol.com**

**You were born with Resilience.
You still have it now.**

Was it protected and nurtured when you were little?
Did your life as a child bring...

- Love and care that provided protection from stress?
- Relationships that supported growth and coping?
or...
 - Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?
 - What are “Adverse Childhood Experiences”?
- Abuse or Neglect of a child or youth or a home that sometimes had more stress than love.

There are 10 types of ACEs. They are common for children. In the “ACE Study” two out of 3 adults had at least one type of ACE as a child. One out of 6 adults had 4 or more types. Most do well in their lives. Many continue to have stress.

Research (<http://www.cdc.gov/NCCDPHP/ACE/>) has shown that the more types of ACEs we experienced as children, the more likely we are to have physical and behavioral health problems as adults.

Our problems put our children at higher risk for ACEs.

Research has also shown that love and caring relationships bring out our Resilience and are Protective Factors in our own lives and in the lives of our children.

This brochure is designed to help you:

Affirm your Resilience, sources of strength,
and support

List challenges you may have faced as a child (ACEs) that could have caused you stress and may affect your health

Reflect on how you may deal with any stressful challenges

Identify sources of healing, growth, and support for parenting and for protecting your children

Resilience/Stress Questionnaire

Person completing Questionnaire: Mother Father Professional Other _____
Birth Year(s) of child(ren) 19__ 20__

Your answers are confidential. You do not need to share them with anyone but you may find it helpful to do so. If answering any of the questions is disturbing, you may answer them at another time if you prefer.

Please circle the most accurate answer under each statement:

1. I believe that my mother loved me when I was little.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

2. I believe that my father loved me when I was little.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

3. When I was little, other people helped my mother and father take care of me and they seemed to love me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

4. I've heard that when I was an infant someone in my family enjoyed playing with me, and I enjoyed it, too.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

5. When I was a child, there were relatives in my family who made me feel better if I was sad or worried.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

6. When I was a child, neighbors or my friends' parents seemed to like me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

7. When I was a child, teachers, coaches, youth leaders, or ministers were there to help me.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
--------------------	------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------------------

Resilience/Stress Questionnaire - page 2

8. Someone in my family cared about how I was doing in school.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

9. My family, neighbors and friends talked often about making our lives better.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

10. We had rules in our house and were expected to keep them.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

11. When I felt really bad, I could almost always find someone I trusted to talk to.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

12. As a youth, people noticed that I was capable and could get things done.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

13. I was independent and a go-getter.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

14. I believed that life is what you make it.

Definitely True	Probably True	Not Sure	Probably Not True	Definitely Not True
-----------------	---------------	----------	-------------------	---------------------

___ **How many of these 14 Protective Factors did I have as a child and youth?
(How many of the 14 were circled “Definitely True” or “Probably True”)?**

___ **How many still help me now?**

Comments on Resilience and Protective Factors:

Stress Related Personal Health History

1. Have you smoked at least 100 cigarettes in your entire life? Yes No
2. If “Yes” above, were you 14 or younger when you began to smoke cigarettes fairly regularly? Yes No
3. Do you smoke cigarettes now? Yes No
4. Have you ever had a problem with your use of alcohol or have you ever considered yourself to be an alcoholic? Yes No
5. Have you ever used street drugs? Yes No
6. Have you ever injected street drugs? Yes No
7. Have you had or do you now have depression or feel down in the dumps? Yes No
8. Have you ever attempted to commit suicide? Yes No
9. Have you had sexual intercourse with more than 30 different partners during your lifetime? Yes No
10. Have you ever been treated for or told you had any venereal disease? Yes No
11. Since you turned 18 years old, have you ever been raped? Yes No
12. Have you ever had or do you now have hallucinations (seen, smelled, or heard things that were not really there)? Yes No
13. Have you ever been diagnosed with or treated for psychosis, schizophrenia, manic depression or bipolar disorder? Yes No

Of the above 13, how many stress-related health risks or disorders have I had? (Yes answers) _____

If answering any of the questions has upset you, speak to a trusted family member or friend. If more upset, call your doctor, your child’s doctor, a mental health crisis hot line, a family violence hot line, or 911.

Comments on ACE Questions or stress-related health risks or disorders:

Next Steps:

Finding ways to cope:

- ___ Talking with a trusted friend or family member
- ___ Talking with my doctor or my child's doctor
- ___ Reading a pamphlet or web site
- ___ Talking with other parents about what we've been through and how we cope.
- ___ Finding a helpful group for coping or stress-management skills
- ___ Finding a helpful group for parenting skills
- ___ Finding out if I need a doctor's help right away

Helping others:

If you are fortunate enough to have had few ACEs or none, you might help other parents in your neighborhood or town who are facing stress now. Some parents have formed networks to set up play dates or share special activities for parents of infants and young children. Others have arranged for space at the local library or elementary school for parents of infants to get together.

Reading:

The following are references to learn more about Resilience, Protective Factors, and Adverse Childhood Experiences:

Resilience:

Websites on the Internet: A Mindset to Foster Resilience in Your Children: Resilience Guide for Parents and Teachers

www.apahelpcenter.org/featuredtopics/feature.php?id=39

Library of resources: www.resilnet.uiuc.edu/library.html

Google: Promoting Resilience in Children: What Parents Can Do

ACE Study and resources:

<http://www.cdc.gov/NCCDPHP/ACE/>; www.cestudy.org

Parenting Young Children:

www.zerotothree.org

www.aap.org

Books:

Ginsburg, KR. (2006). *A Parent's Guide to Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Your Child Roots and Wings.* American Academy of Pediatrics.

27 2011 hbr